

GILA News-Courier

VOL. I NO. 4

RIVERS, ARIZONA

September 23, 1942

YOSHITSU HEADS COLONY LABOR BOARD RECRUITING

Plans for increasing the number of volunteers engaged in picking the highly valuable long-staple cotton crop of Pinal and Maricopa Counties were announced this morning following a meeting of E.R. Fryer, acting project director, with several WRA division heads at the administrative mess hall in Block 18.

An important step in the program will be the selection of a Council of evacuees to work under the direction of Masao Yoshitsu, now serving as chief recruiting officer of the Division of Employment and Housing. Also serving on the Council will be an administrative official of the War Relocation Authority. This Council will investigate working conditions at each ranch where workers are desired.

Following the investigation the Council will recommend the number of workers to be recruited for each ranch in view of the available labor supply at the Gila River Project and the demands from other growers.

The Council will also confer with the County War Boards of Pinal and Maricopa Counties on problems of working conditions, the allocation of workers and other factors having some relation to achieving the goal of picking the largest possible amount of long-staple cotton.

Following the morning's meeting Mr. Fryer announced

that he has asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture War Boards of Pinal and Maricopa Counties to meet with him here tomorrow for a thorough review of the cotton picking program.

"My entire concern is with meeting the nation's needs in a critical situation," Mr. Fryer said. "We hope to organize our recruiting campaign so that evacuees will have dependable information on working conditions. We hope, too, that through cooperation between growers and workers, each person who goes into the cotton fields will increase his earnings by being able to pick more cotton. I am much encouraged by the fact that several workers on Tuesday, the second day, were able to pick very much more cotton than on Monday."

"Improve"-Fryer

A special appeal was made by E.R. Fryer, Acting Project Director, to all residents of the Gila River Project to improve the appearance of their homes by employment of native shrubs and plants which can be used.

CANAL CAMPER Is COTTON CHAMP

Reports from volunteers returning from the fields on Tuesday evening disclosed that seven pickers had harvested more than 100 pounds each at the Smith-Thornburg ranch. An Issei from the Canal Camp, who was not identified, received first honors with a total of 119 pounds.

Runner-ups for this title were George Nagano with 116 pounds, Mas Okumura with 113 pounds and Mr. Mukai with 112.

Joining the volunteers on Monday were Mr. and Mrs. Minoru Tanimura. On Tuesday Mrs. Tanimura picked 70 pounds and her husband 72.

SAKAMOTO TELLS COLONY'S VIEW

Frank Sakamoto, Central Block Manager, stated certain facts at a special meeting Saturday with the administrative staff regarding labor in the cotton fields.

He pointed out that: (1) those people who have no housing or family worries have volunteered to date; (2) many others will volunteer who can be assured of the security of their family in these respects; and (3) if these worries were eliminated by proper housing arrangements, many more cotton pickers would be assured.

FRYER'S STATEMENT

RESIDENTS URGED TO BEAUTIFY CITY

"We all want Rivers to be a beautiful city—a city reflecting the personal pride of those who have their homes here and who want this community to blend with the natural beauty of its surroundings. We can achieve this almost without cost by simply working together.

"I am asking all administrative heads concerned to give special attention to the policing of grounds

and the disposal of waste. As rapidly as the construction program permits, we will have open ditches filled in and other improvements made.

"To all of you who live here, I want to give special encouragement in the transplanting of native shrubs and plants around your homes and in the creation of small rock gardens. Many of you brought plants and seeds with you which

can also be used. Until irrigation water becomes available, it will be necessary, of course, to plan improvement requiring a small amount of water.

"I shall watch this program for the improvement of grounds and the beautification of homes with special interest. Later, I hope we can find some way to give special recognition to whose whose creations are outstanding."